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GHOST RIDER

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SCOTTIE

A Cracker Jack story

OKAY, SCOTTIE! THE SCORE IS TIED, BASES LOADED, AND TWO OUTS! GET IN THERE AND SHOW 'EM WHAT YOU'RE MADE OF.

I'LL DO MY BEST, COACH.

STRIKE ONE!

!GULP! WHAT IF I STRIKE OUT???

STRIKE TWO!

YOU CAN DO IT, SCOTTIE!

YOU'RE A CRACKER JACK.

ZOOM!

WHAP!

WHEN YOU'RE REALLY GOOD-THEY CALL YOU CRACKER JACK

YOU DID IT, SCOTTIE.

WE WON THE PLAYOFFS!

WHAT A CRACKER JACK!

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Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

THE GHOST RIDER!

THE LAIR OF THE LOAN SHARK!

INSIDE THE QUENTIN CARNIVAL'S MAIN SHOW TENT, AN AWED STANDING-ROOM-ONLY CROWD HOLDS ITS COLLECTIVE BREATH AS, HIGH ABOVE THE ARENA FLOOR, STUNT CYCLIST JOHNNY BLAZE AND HIS ASSISTANT RED FOWLER PERFORM A DEATH-DEFYING FEAT!



THOSE ACCELERATOR CONTROLS I BUILT INTO THE FOOT PEGS ARE WORKING LIKE A CHARM, RED! I CAN CONTROL THE BIKE'S ACCELERATION WITH MY FEET, WHILE I--

BLAZE, DO ME A FAVOR AND QUIT BLOWIN' YOUR HORN!

SCRIPT BY
MICHAEL FLEISHER
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JACK SPARLING
INKS BY
TOM SUTTON
COLORS BY
GEORGE ROUSSOS
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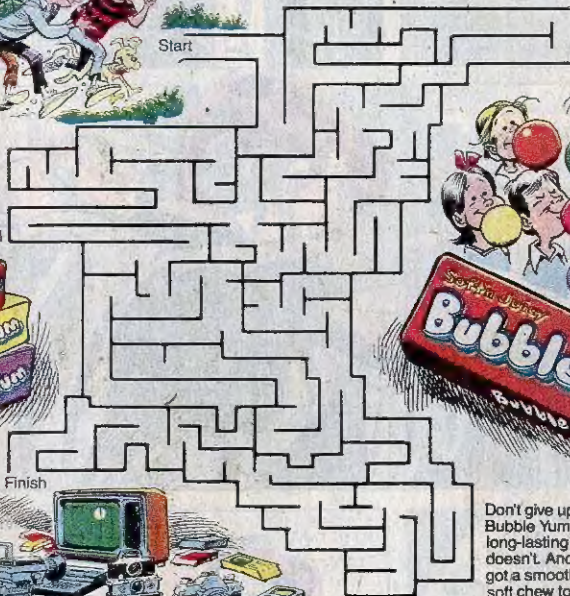
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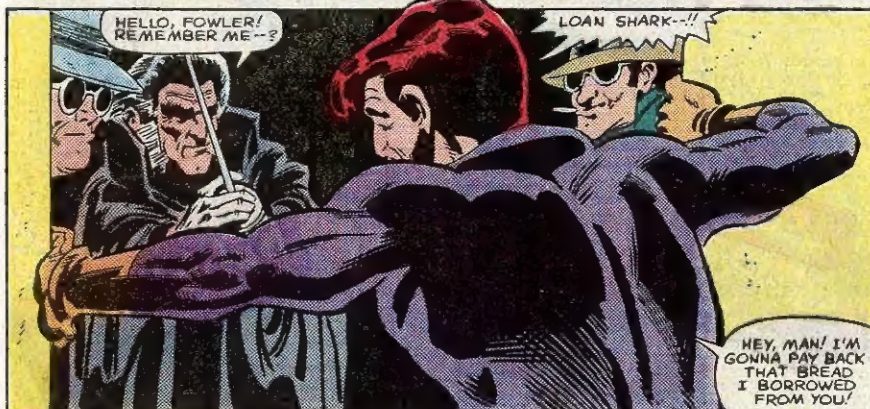
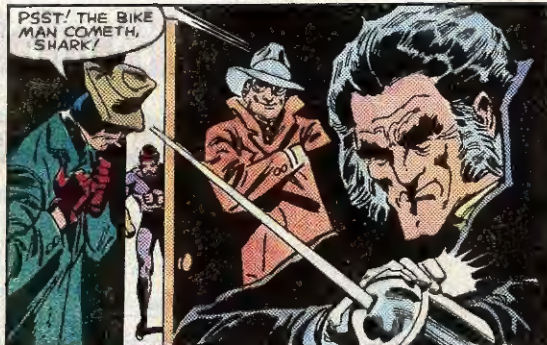
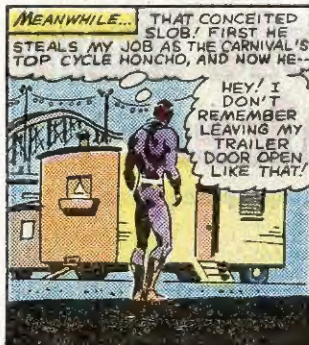
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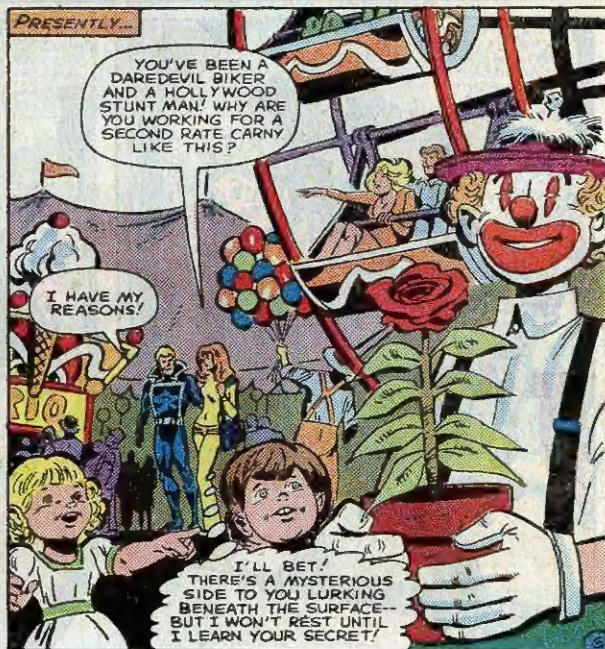
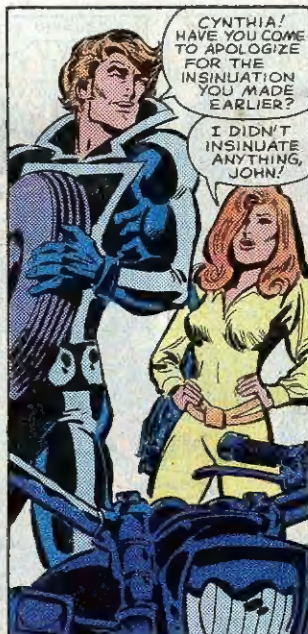
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⁶ Sweepstakes open to U.S. residents, except where prohibited by law. Not open to employees and their families of Life Savers, Inc., their affiliates, advertising, and judging agencies.

⁷ For a complete list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to: Bubble Yum Family Fun in Games Winners List, P.O. Box 586 WL, Lowell, IN 46356.







LATER THAT SAME NIGHT, ALONE IN HIS TRAILER, JOHNNY BLAZE IS A BUNDLE OF SWEAT AND FRAZZLED NERVES AS HE WAGES A DESPERATE STRUGGLE.

IT'S NO USE! I'VE BEEN LYING HERE TRYING TO FIGHT HIM--TRYING TO CONTROL THE DEMON CHURNING AND SEETHING WITHIN ME!



HE'S LIKE SOME KIND OF NARCOTIC POUNDING IN MY BLOOD! I'M POSSESSED BY HIM, BLAST IT! POSSESSED!

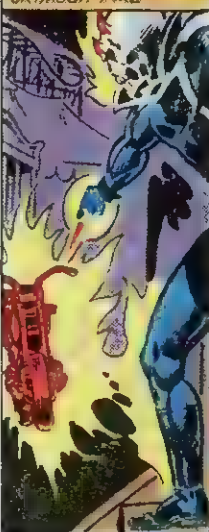
THE ONLY WAY I CAN KEEP MYSELF FROM GOING STARK, RAVING CRAZY--



--IS TO SHED MY MOTILITY BIT BY BIT--TO FEEL THE FLESH MELTING FROM MY BODY--AND TRANSFORM MYSELF INTO--



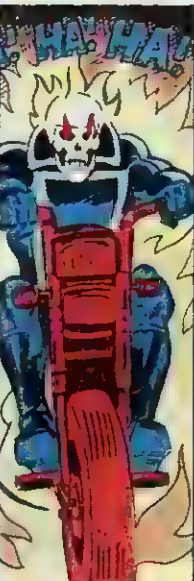
OUTSIDE JOHNNY'S TRAILER, THE SATANIC AVENGER STRETCHES FORTH A BLACK-GLOVED HAND TO MATERIALIZE A CYCLE FORGED OF CRIMSON FIRE



GLOWERING THROUGH THE DUSK FIRE! ORB, THE HELL-SPAWNED DEMON LEAPS ASTRIDE THE THROU' NG RE. -B F-



-- AND AT A SPEED NO MAN MADE CYCLE COULD HOPE TO MUSTER, HURTLES SAFELY AWAY INTO THE COAL-BLACK NIGHT.



WOE BE TO ANY MORTAL MAN WHO CROSSES THE PATH OF



--THE GHOST RIDER! 7

WHILE IN YET AN-
OTHER TRAILER ON THE
CARNIVAL GROUNDS...

TEN THOUSAND DOL-
LARS! IT MIGHT AS
WELL BE A MILLION!
I'M BUSTED! THERE'S
NO WAY I CAN COME
UP WITH THAT KIND
OF BREAD!



WHERE
AM I GOING
TO GET IT?



MAYBE I'LL COME UP
WITH AN IDEA OUT
ON THE OPEN ROAD!



YEAH, SURE, ALL I
HAVE TO DO IS
CLEAR AWAY SOME OF
THESE COBBLES!



I'M NOT GONNA
LET THE LOAN
SHARK AND HIS HIT
MEN SCARE ME!



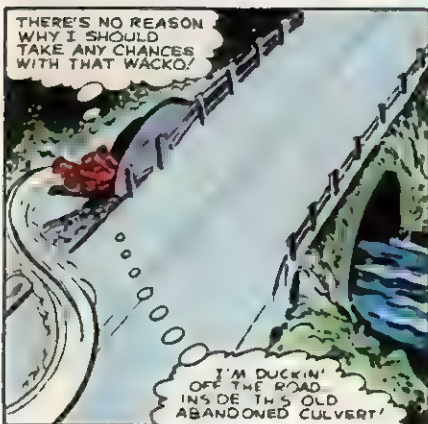
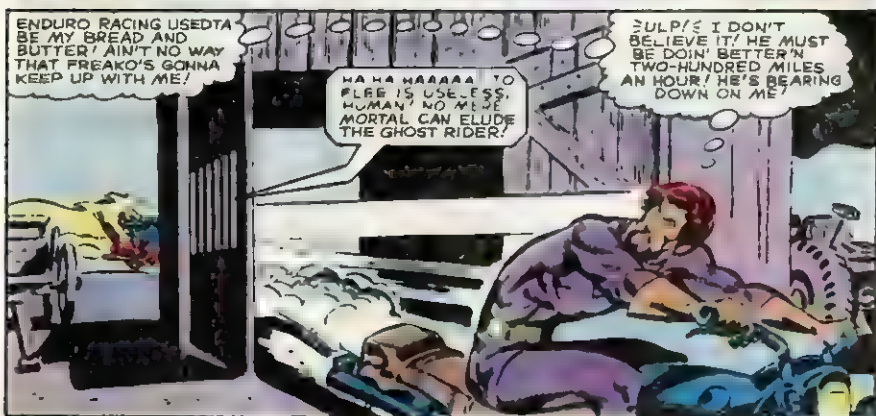
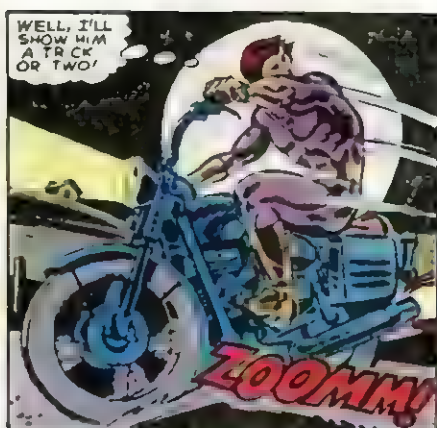
I'LL GO FLAKEY IF
I STAY COOPED UP
IN THIS SARDINE
CAN! I'VE GOTTA
GET SOME AIR!



BUT THEN, SUDDENLY,
UNEXPECTEDLY...

HOLY FREAKIN'
CRIPES! WHAT
THE HECK IS THAT-?





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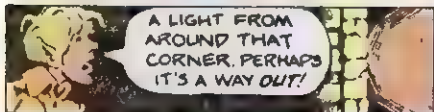
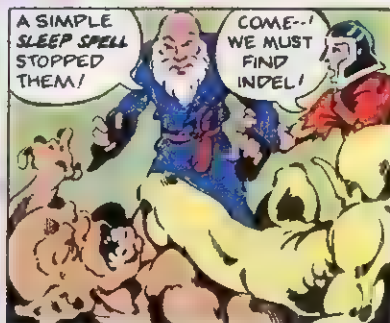
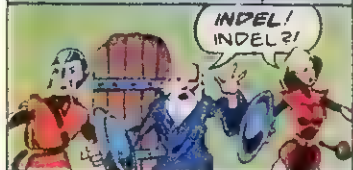
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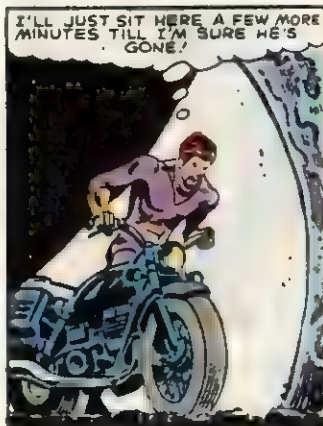
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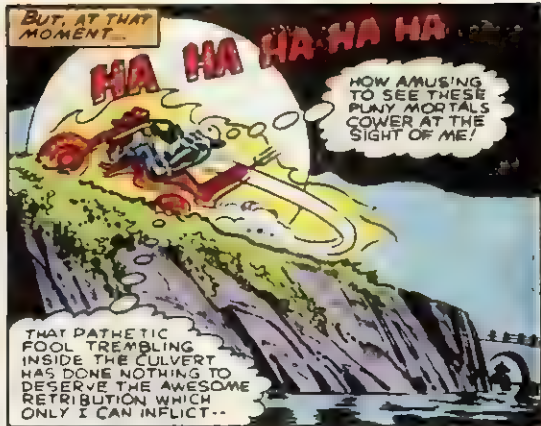
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I'LL JUST SIT HERE A FEW MORE MINUTES TILL I'M SURE HE'S GONE!

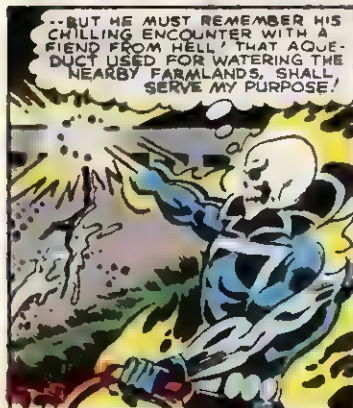


BUT, AT THAT MOMENT...

HA HA HA HA HA

HOW AMUSING TO SEE THESE FUNY MORTALS COWER AT THE SIGHT OF ME!

THAT PATHETIC FOOL TREMBLING INSIDE THE CULVERT HAS DONE NOTHING TO DESERVE THE AWESOME RETRIBUTION WHICH ONLY I CAN INFLICT--



...BUT HE MUST REMEMBER HIS CHILLING ENCOUNTER WITH A FIEND FROM HELL! THAT AQUEDUCT USED FOR WATERING THE NEARBY FARMLANDS, SHALL SERVE MY PURPOSE!

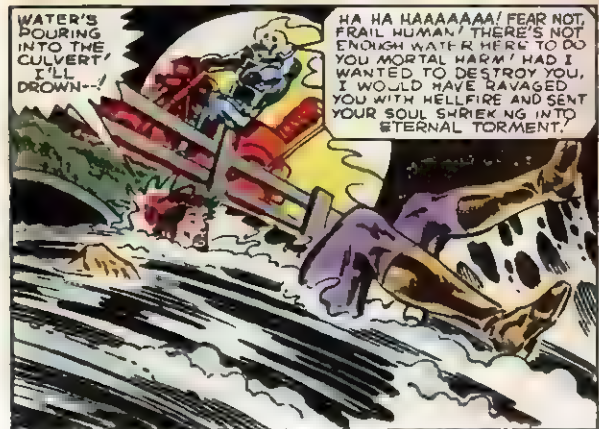


FOR THE SECOND TIME THIS NIGHT, A BOLT OF SEARING ELDITCH FLAME BLAZES FORTH FROM THE OUTSTRETCHED HAND OF THE DEMON BIKER...



AND, IN THE NEXT SPINE-CHILLING INSTANT...

OH NO! THAT SKULL-HEADED MADMAN! HE'S BLASTED THE AQUEDUCT!



WATER'S POURING INTO THE CULVERT! I'LL DROWN--!

HA HA HAAAAAAA! FEAR NOT, FRAIL HUMAN! THERE'S NOT ENOUGH WATER HERE TO DO YOU MORTAL HARM! HAD I WANTED TO DESTROY YOU, I WOULD HAVE RAVAGED YOU WITH HELLFIRE AND SENT YOUR SOUL SHRIeking INTO ETERNAL TORMENT.



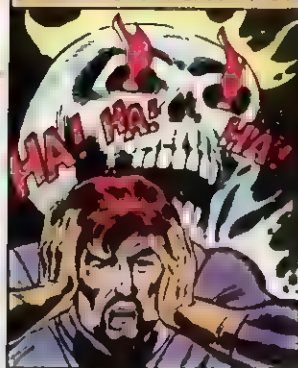
WITH A MIND-STUNNING SURGE OF NETHERWORLDLY POWER THE BRIMSTONE BIKER ROCKETS AWAY INTO THE MOONDRENCHED NIGHT...

HA HA!

SHAKEN TO HIS VERY SOUL,
RED FOWLER CLAMBERS TO
SAFETY



FROM THIS NIGHT FORWARD--
HIS NIGHTMARES WILL RE-
SOUND WITH THE EERIE
LAUGHTER OF THE GHOST RIDER!



DRAINED BOTH IN BODY
AND IN SPIRIT, RED
FOWLER EVENTUALLY
STAGGERS BACK TO THE
MIDWAY OF THE GENTIN
CARNIVAL



THE GROUNDS ARE
LIFELESS AT THIS
HOUR EVERYONE
MUST ST LL BE
ASLEEP!



OH, NO! I-IT CAN'T
BE! THAT FLAME-
HEADED FREAK MUST
HAVE FOLLOWED ME
HERE!



NO I DON'T
THINK HE
REALIZES
I'M HERE!



HIS WHOLE BODY IT'S--
CHANGING--BECOMING
HUMAN!



GOOD GRIEF!
THAT THING
IS REALLY
JOHNNY
BLAZE!



IT'S JUST NOT POSSI-
BLE! I KNOW BLAZE!
HE MAY BE AN EGO-
ISTICAL WISEGUY...BUT
HE'S NO MONSTER!



THAT HORRIBLE EXPERIENCE
OUT ON THE ROAD MUST'VE
ADDLED MY BRAIN. I'VE
GOT TO TRY TO FORGET
ABOUT IT--AND GET
SOME SLEEP!



FOR MANY HOURS RED FOWLER TOSSES AND TURNS HIS SLEEP TORMENTED BY SKULL-HEADED DEMONS. FINALLY, ALMOST MERCIFUL...



WHA! IS THE ALARM I ALWAYS SET TO REMIND ME OF THE EVENING SHOW, BUT IT COULDN'T BE THAT LATE!

OH, WOW! I'VE SLEPT THROUGH THE WHOLE DAY! THE LOAN SHARK AND HIS TORPE-JOES WILL BE HERE IN AN HOUR! THERE'S NO WAY I CAN RAISE THAT MONEY NOW! I'M ALREADY OVERDRAWN ON MY CARNIVAL SALARY!

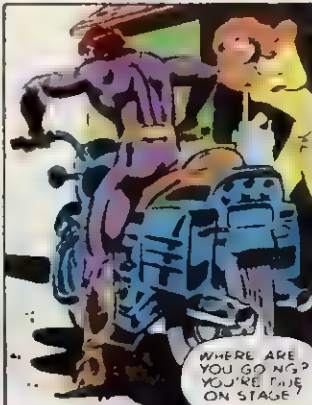


I'VE HEARD WHAT THE SHARK DOES TO WELCHERS! I-I'VE GOTTA GET OUTTA HERE!



IF ONLY I CAN REACH MY SPARE CYCLE!

RED! MR. QUENTIN SENT ME TO FIND YOU!



WHERE ARE YOU GOING? YOU'RE LATE ON STAGE!



YOU CAN GO DO THE SHOW IF YOU WANT TO, LADY.



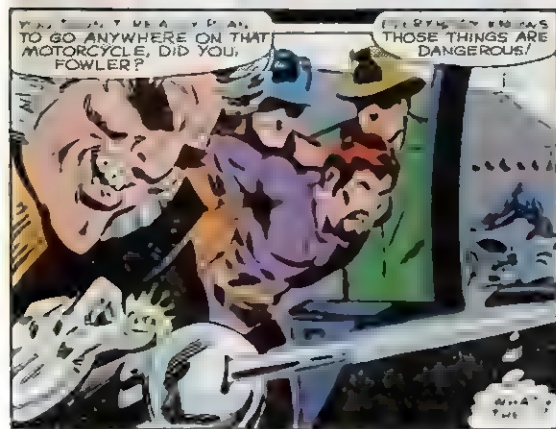
RED! WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU? WHAT'S WRONG?!

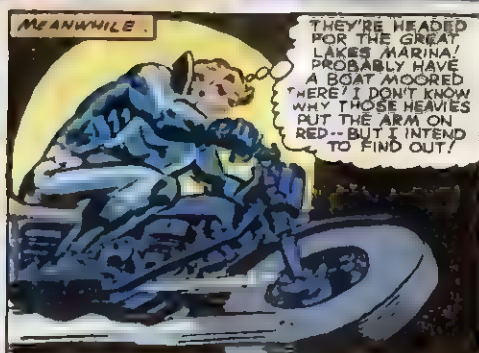
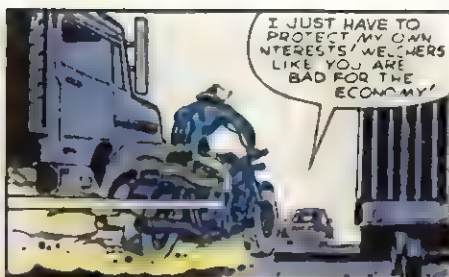
WHEW. TALK ABOUT HEADING OUT IN A HURRY!



I JUST DESIGNED!

FWOOM!





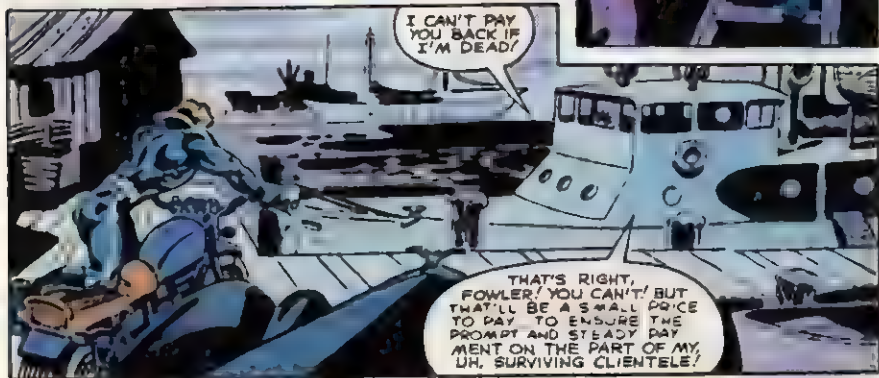


MOVE IT, FOWLER!

YEAH, THE POOR LITTLE FISH OUT IN THE LAKE ARE GETTING HARBORED BY THE M.U.T.E. AND WE WOULDN'T WANT TO DISAPPOINT EM!



LOAN SHARK, YOU'RE CUTTING YOUR OWN THROAT! CAN'T YOU SEE THAT?



I CAN'T PAY YOU BACK IF I'M DEAD!

THAT'S RIGHT, FOWLER! YOU CAN'T! BUT THAT'LL BE A SMALL PRICE TO PAY TO ENSURE THE PROMPT AND STEADY PAYMENT ON THE PART OF MY, UH, SURVIVING CLIENTELE!



UH-OH! THEY'RE READY TO CAST OFF--AND THEY'RE TAKING RED WITH THEM!

I'LL WAIT FOR THAT CREWMAN TO CLIMB BACK ON BOARD--



--AND THEN SEE IF I CAN PULL RED'S FAT OUT OF THE FIRE!



THEN, MINUTES LATER

WE'RE GONNA BE CLEAN A THE LAKEWONT IN A FEW MINUTES. LOAN SHARK! WHAT NOW?

NOW, SPARKY, I AM GOING TO GIVE YOU A LESSON IN HOW TO DISMEMBER A DEADBEAT!

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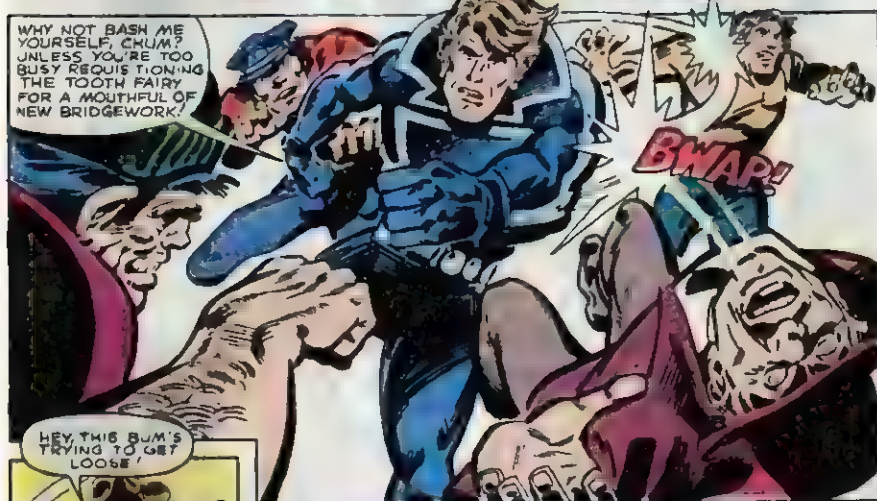
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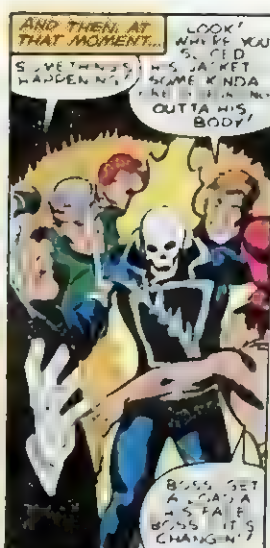
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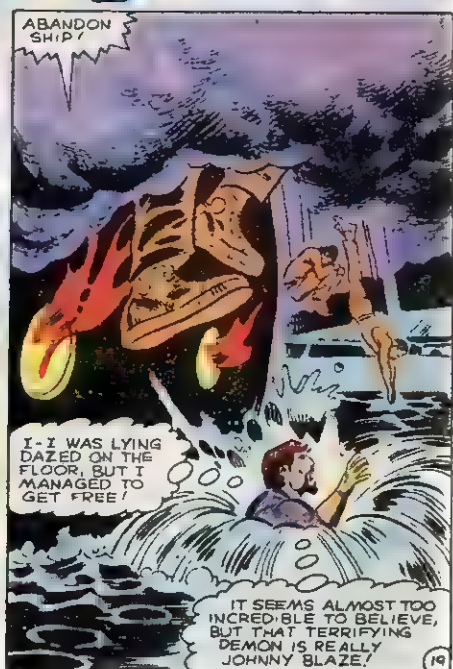
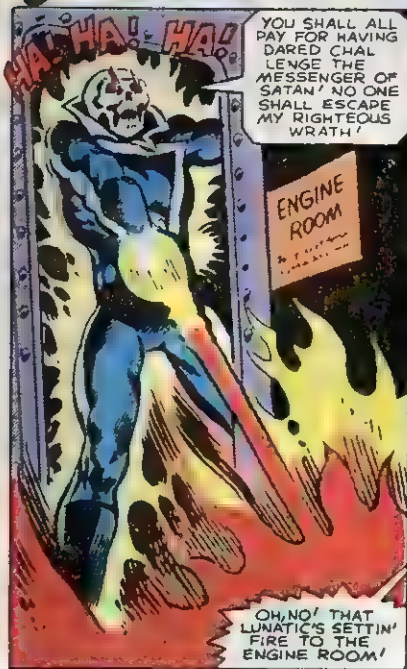
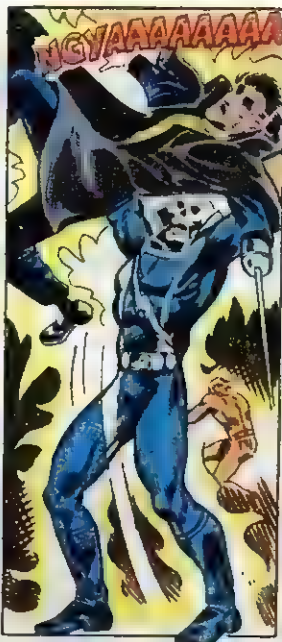


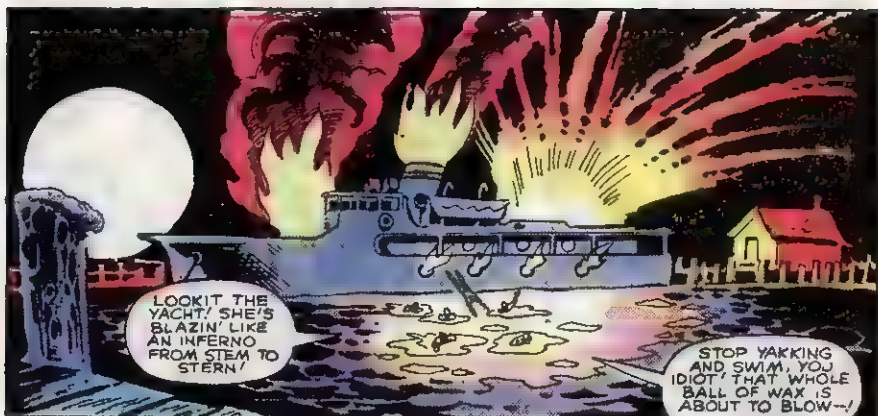
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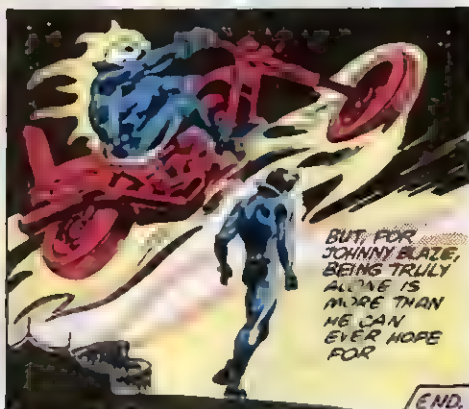
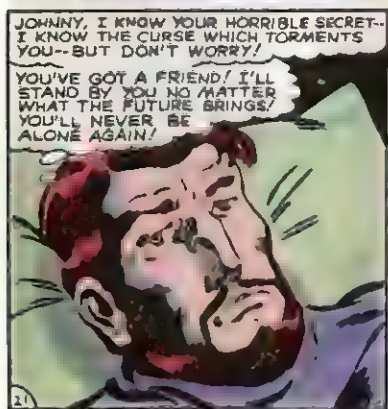
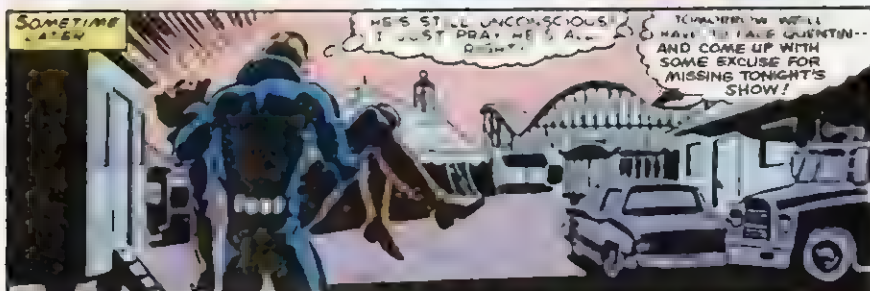
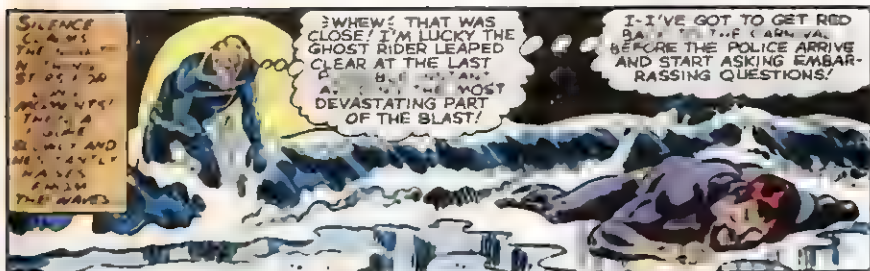












BULLPEN BULLETINS

TIME FOR A NEW IMAGE

All my life I've tried to be a nice guy—you know, being kind to small children, donating spare change to unemployed Vikings, and feeding stray animals—but what has it gotten me? Maligned, that's what! Character-assassinated, that's what! Every time I go to a convention these days some irate reader is bound to walk up to me and say in a low growl, "How dare you take (name of artist) off of (pick a comic), you low-down, rotten, evil scoundrel!" Or, better still, "I hear you were the one who discarded that in X-MEN #137 Phoenix should die—Murderer!"

I suppose I could continue to explain that artists generally take themselves off of books usually because they can't keep up with all their assignments. (Why they accept twice as many assignments as Doc Ock could handle in the first place is a mystery!) And I could continue to calmly elucidate the circumstances regarding the demise of Phoenix, but—I've been pushed too far! I've had it! No more Mr. Nice Guy!

"HOWDY POG'NERS," HE BARED THROUGH AN EVIL SMILE...

Tough... cruel... ruthless... yeah, that's the new me. I'll let nothing stand in my way and no one defy me as I continue my relentless march toward absolute power! I'll become a Super-Villain, like Doctor Doom... or a Master of Evil, like Fu Manchu... er, I know! A Corrupt Oil Baron!



J.B.

Nice hat, huh? I actually bought it to spare my hair from cooking in the blazing San Diego sun while I was there attending the San Diego Con this July, but it suits my new image just fine.

All right, enough of this... let's get down to (evil) business.

DO UNTO OTHERS... AND BLOAT!

I've been hearing reports that DAREDEVIL is finally being "discovered" by comics fans across the country. People are beginning to realize what I've known for years—that Frank Miller, who writes and draws the book, is good... real good... too good. Hmm. If this upstart punk Miller gets too popular he may become difficult to control. Maybe I should do something about this Miller guy... maybe get rid of him? He, that's too quick... too puny... Ah! I know! I'll certain "unimpeachable sources" were to "reveal" that Miller draws kittens for fun every Friday evening... let's see... a few well-placed bribes ought to accomplish that!

NOW, NOW CAN I MAKE A BUCK OUTTA THIS...?

You may have noticed that last month the price of our regular comics went from 50¢ to 60¢. I'd like to be able to tell you that all that extra dough is going in-

to my pockets—but unfortunately, there really isn't any "extra dough." The increase in price just covers our increase in costs. Too bad. Now that I've become truly evil, I'd really enjoy skimming off some cash and funneling it into my new, secret Swiss Bank Account. I should apologize to you, my loyal reader, but being evil means you never have to say you're sorry.

Maybe I can arrange to have the price raised to 75¢.

GRAFT, FOR FUN AND PROFIT!

Hmm... all I have to do is set up a little system whereby artists and writers have to slip me a little cash under the table in order to get choice assignments and I could turn a tidy profit... but, no, on second thought, Tom DeFalco, Superior Editor of THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN, MARVEL TEAM-UP, WHAT IF...? and GHOST RIDER is apparently already doing that. I noticed that he has a jar on his desk labelled "Kick backs" (it couldn't be just for laughs, could it? Nah!) Being that he's one of my most trusted lackeys, I'll leave that business to him. Of course I will muscle in and grab a piece of his take—a big piece—leaving him, say, a generous ten percent. After all, initiative like Tom's should be rewarded!

And maybe I'll send a list of my secret out to all the staff and freelancers just before Christmas. That way I'll get some nice gifts from them... or else!

WHY?

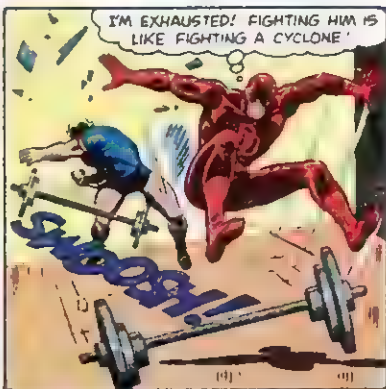
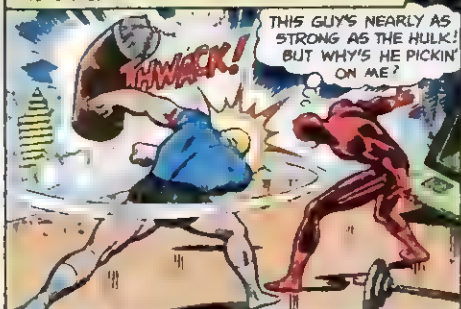
This column is so evil even I, J.S., can't stand it. I think we need a change of pace... a little interlude of niceness. I wonder who I can get who's really sweet and nice to take over for a paragraph? Ah! I know!

LOUISE JONES'S CHEERFUL & NICE NEWS

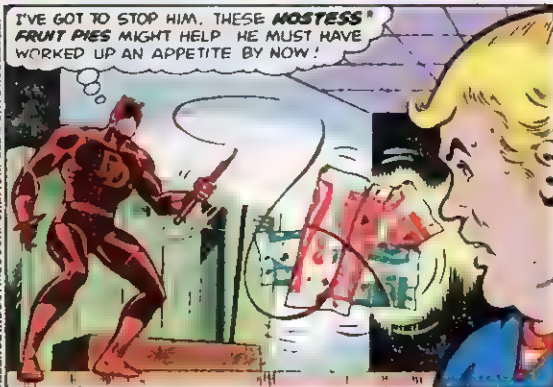
Dear Louise, after a long absence, I'm back! I've been busy with my new column, "The Evil Empire," but I've also been busy with my new book, "The Evil Empire: A Guide to the Dark Side of Life." I've also been busy with my new TV show, "The Evil Empire: A Guide to the Dark Side of Life." I've also been busy with my new movie, "The Evil Empire: A Guide to the Dark Side of Life." I've also been busy with my new album, "The Evil Empire: A Guide to the Dark Side of Life." I've also been busy with my new CD, "The Evil Empire: A Guide to the Dark Side of Life." I've also been busy with my new DVD, "The Evil Empire: A Guide to the Dark Side of Life." I've also been busy with my new Blu-ray, "The Evil Empire: A Guide to the Dark Side of Life." I've also been busy with my new 4K, "The Evil Empire: A Guide to the Dark Side of Life." I've also been busy with my new 8K, "The Evil Empire: A Guide to the Dark Side of Life." 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'DAREDEVIL'S LONGEST FIGHT!'

BABY FACE JOHNNY IS THE BIGGEST BRUISER EVER TO HIT MANHATTAN. HE'S DESTINED FOR THE WORLD'S CHAMPIONSHIP FIGHT. FOR THREE HOURS STRAIGHT, HE AND DAREDEVIL HAVE BEEN SLUGGING IT OUT.



I'VE GOT TO STOP HIM. THESE **HOSTESS® FRUIT PIES** MIGHT HELP. HE MUST HAVE WORKED UP AN APPETITE BY NOW!



WOW! REAL FRUIT FILLING-- APPLE AND CHERRY. AND A LIGHT, TENDER CRUST. DELICIOUS!



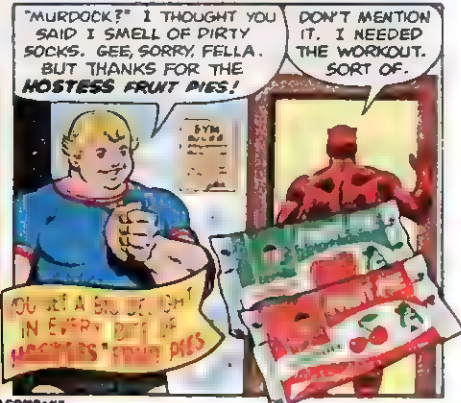
HEY, DAREDEVIL, WHAT WERE WE FIGHTING ABOUT, ANYWAY?

I DON'T KNOW! I JUST ASKED YOU WHAT YOU THINK OF JACK MURDOCK'S RECORD?



"MURDOCK?" I THOUGHT YOU SAID I SMELL OF DIRTY SOCKS. GEE, SORRY, FELLA. BUT THANKS FOR THE **HOSTESS FRUIT PIES!**

DON'T MENTION IT. I NEEDED THE WORKOUT. SORT OF.



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GHOST WRITERS!

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

TOM DeFALCO
EDITOR
MARK GRUENWALD
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Dear Editor,

GHOST RIDER has been a much better book lately since he began fighting villains whose powers are more on a level with his own. The lamebrain "ordinary mortals" that G.R. keeps spouting off about get pretty monotonous, after all. Moondark the magician in G.R. #59 has the makings of an excellent opponent if he continues to be handled right. Water Wizard is potentially deadly, too, though I found it amusing how both Moondark and G.R. kept putting W.W. in his place. The Wizard's inferno complex was also a nice touch, but if you take it too far, he'll be pretty ineffective as a real nemesis.

All in all, GHOST RIDER #59 was one of the best issues of this magazine I've read in a long time.

David Peattie
4617 Birch Bark Rd.
Concord CA 94521

Thanks, pal. Everyone who had anything to do with chronicling that epic exploit of our skeletal scourge has just taken a bow. Of course they may actually have been ducking Ghosty's hellfire blasts. Demons are just so hard to please sometimes!

Dear Ghost Writers,

I feel that GHOST RIDER is rapidly developing into a great series. I enjoy best the tales where he is involved in human dramas with ordinary people rather than battling super-villains. I don't mind an occasional slug-fest with a super-baddie, as long as it's just for a change of pace. My suggestion would be to alternate between human dramas, and tales of the supernatural. Personally, I'd hate it if G.R. got carried away with super-villains and became just another super-hero-type. Moondark and Water Wizard were okay in #59, though. Anyway, keep up the good work.

Mike Crimmins
Peterborough, NH

As long as Ghost Rider keeps up the bad work, his faithful chroniclers will keep up the good, Mike. Your point about variety in G.R. tales is well taken. But have no fear, it is not likely that our motor-payco will start acting too heroic. Back when Johnny Blaze was in the Champions, ol' Ghosty got all the super-heroing out of his system and now that

he's less controlled by Blaze's conscience, he's not likely to do that scene again. In fact, if you want to see his current attitude toward costumed do-gooders, check out AVENGERS #214, still on sale. We'd better warn you, though. Get set for a shock a minute if you do!

And now for one of the most interesting letters we've received in quite some time...

Dear Editor,

I've been following the exploits of the Ghost Rider for quite a while now and have observed with interest the changing relationship between Johnny Blaze and his demonic alter ego. When Johnny Blaze first became the Ghost Rider, the transformation would occur against Johnny's will whenever the sun set. Later, the transformation would occur no matter what time of day whenever danger was nearby. Now, Johnny is able to transform at will no matter what the circumstances, and his demonic self seems to be in conflict with his human side over whose "turn" it is to exist. Why this gradual change has occurred has yet to be explained. I'd like to offer my own theory.

First, we have to figure out just what the Ghost Rider persona really is. Is it simply a manifestation of the repressed "dark side" of Johnny Blaze's personality (like the Hulk is of Bruce Banner) or is the Ghost Rider a real Hell-born demon that has possessed Johnny Blaze? I believe that G.R. is a real demon, a supernatural entity.

Then, along came stunt-rider Johnny Blaze. Out of love for a girl named Roxanne Simpson, Johnny made a pact with the ruler of a supernatural realm to save the life of her father. The deal was that if Roxanne's father was spared from the disease that was killing him, the demon's agent of vengeance (Ghost Rider) would possess the ability to transform Johnny's body into his own demonic likeness. Johnny was cheated when Simpson died in a cycle crash... but he still has to "shake his space," as they say in California, with the Ghost Rider, who still co-possesses his body.

If my interpretation of the events of G.R.'s origin is true, why is the relationship between Blaze and the demon changing? Obviously, the Ghost Rider is getting stronger, learning to control more and more of Johnny's soul and body. If Johnny doesn't take steps soon, the Ghost Rider may take

possession of him completely.

Personally, I would like to see a bit of a reversion to the way Blaze and Ghost Rider existed before. I think the Ghost Rider should appear only when there is evil present, not simply mortal danger to Johnny Blaze. Giving Johnny the ability to sense evil would aid in Ghost Rider's mission of vengeance and also provide him with a lot of sticky problems if G.R. wants to 80/10 out in inconvenient circumstances.

Anyway, I hope my ideas have provided you with food for thought.

Carl F. Correa
56 Linden St.
Lindenhurst, NY 11757

That they have, Carl. The nature of the relationship between Blaze and the demon residing inside him will become increasingly clear in the months to come. All we can say right now is that you are essentially right about the demon being a separate entity from Blaze. True, the demon's personality is affected by Blaze's and sometimes good ol' Johnny can coax the fiend into good behavior. But lately, with Johnny's personal life plumbing the depths (due to his losing the motorcycle championship and his inability to find love and happiness), he's had less and less control over his parasitic partner. Anyway, thanks for writing such a thoughtful letter, Carl, and keep on reading. The excitement's just beginning!

SPECIAL NOTE:

We've just received word that a few true believers in Brooklyn have founded a Ghost Rider Fan Club, already boasting thirty members. If you're interested in signing on, please write: Ghost Rider Fan Club, 800 East 21st St., Brooklyn, NY 11218. Tell 'em Marvel sent you.

NEXT ISSUE:

Once again a supernatural menace rears its mighty head. But can even the Ghost Rider battle a being who can extinguish his supernatural flame? Be here in thirty days for "The Witch in the Whirlwind!"

ATTENTION! Here are some more of the folks who entered Marvel's Win Yourself Some Big Bucks Contest! Is your name here?

Bryan Mudd
no address given
Burt Reuter
Weaver, IL
Fred Reynolds Jr.
Middle Island, NY
Richard A. Morgan
Victorville, CA
David Amstutz
Kearney, NE
Eugene L. Gilbreath
no address given
Adrian Webster
no address given
Herschell Stunkard
Elwood, IN
Randy Levy
no address given

Dan McEachid
San Francisco CA
Martin K. vch
Sun Valley CA
Billy Telle
Mankato, MN
Lorry Blas
Ola Falls, NY
James McAndrew Jr.
Methuen, MA
Jason Mangano
Evanston, MA
Matthew Smith
Edina, WV
Jonathan Leach
San Jose, CA
Brian E. Friedman
Las Vegas NV

Jimmy Ziesse
Campos CA
David v.
no address given
Bob Kinsella
Sidney, OH
Craig Whitenack
Baltimore, MD
Picky Primeau
Merrimack, NH
Val Ramos
Fajardo, P.R.
B.J. Gross
no address given
Scott Tennant
Wickliffe, OH
Patty Barron
Pittsburg, NY

Danny Reisinger
Barthow ND
Razvan Ives
N. Miami, FL
Paul Markan
Stratton, Ont. Can.
Stephen Chalovich
Henderson, NV
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Rebecca Payton
Olaton KY
Pat Soppie
Kansas City, MO
Paul Doll
no address given
Leo Hsu
Pittsburgh PA

John Leberman
Bohemia NY
Robert L. Fisher Jr.
Chardonville, VA
Gregory Howard
Ukiah, CA
Eddie Sugden
Orinda, CA
Noel Thomas
Camardagui, NY
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Wilmington, NC
Don Tracy
Garden Grove, CA
Catherine Slawant
no address given
Frank Ruzick
Franklin, MI





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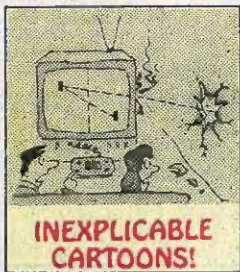
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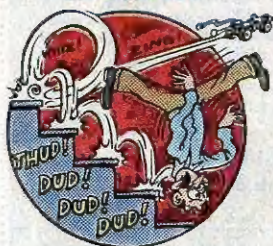
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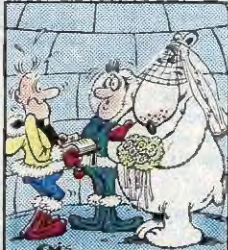
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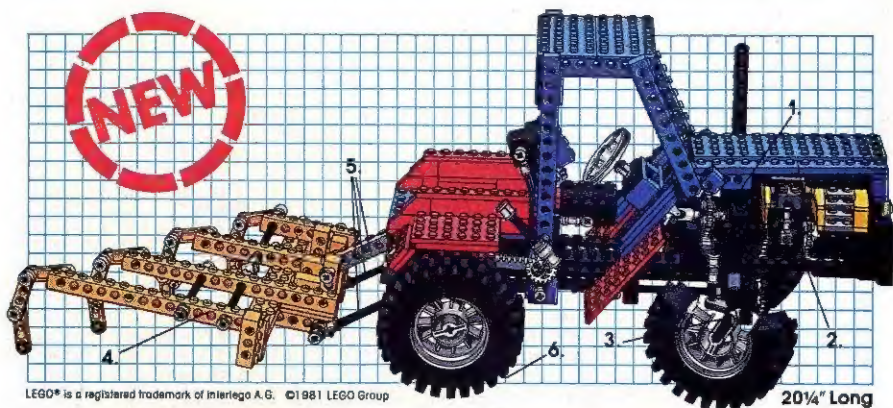


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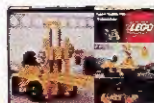
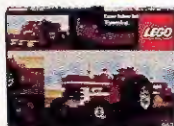
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